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PP RUEHBZ RUEH DU RUEHJO RUEHMR RUEHRN
DE RUEHSB #1121 3501500
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P 151500Z DEC 08
FM AMEMBASSY HARARE
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 3821
INFO RUCNSAD/SOUTHERN AF DEVELOPMENT COMMUNITY COLLECTIVE
RUEHUJA/AMEMBASSY ABUJA 2143
RUEHAR/AMEMBASSY ACCRA 2495
RUEHDS/AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA 2618
RUEHRL/AMEMBASSY BERLIN 1111
RUEHBY/AMEMBASSY CANBERRA 1887
RUEHDK/AMEMBASSY DAKAR 2242
RUEHKM/AMEMBASSY KAMPALA 2667
RUEHNR/AMEMBASSY NAIROBI 5095
RHEHAAA/NSC WASHDC
RHMFISS/EUCOM POLAD VAIHINGEN GE
RUEHGV/USMISSION GENEVA 1762
RUZEJAA/JAC MOLESWORTH RAF MOLESWORTH UK
RHEFDIA/DIA WASHDC
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC

UNCLAS HARARE 001121

SENSITIVE
SIPDIS

AF/S FOR BWALCH
DRL FOR NWILETT

E.O. 12958: N/A
TAGS: [PHUM](#) [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [KPAO](#) [ZI](#)
SUBJECT: HARARE JOURNALIST ABDUCTED, MORE POTENTIALLY TARGETED

1. (SBU) Accredited freelance Zimbabwean journalist Shadrack Andrisson Manyere was abducted from his home in Norton, a suburb of Harare, on the evening of Saturday December 13. Manyere has been a frequent critic of the Zimbabwean government and, unlike some journalists, is fully accredited by the Zimbabwean Media and Information Commission. Men identifying themselves as police with the law and order division arrested Manyere; other officers returned to the house later and took his laptop computer and other files. The computer reportedly contained stories he had written for South African media that had recently been published. Since his apparent arrest on December 13, lawyers have been unable to locate him and police deny holding him.

Herald Accuses U.S. "Spy" of Manipulating Media

2. (SBU) Additionally, in an editorial in the government mouthpiece The Herald on December 13, Nathaniel Manheru (the pen name for Mugabe's spokesman George Charamba) blasted the international media for inaccurately reporting on the situation in Zimbabwe. The editorial declares that Zimbabwe does not need to accredit reporters for foreign news organizations. It also accuses the State Department of using a "lady American intelligence officer" to create a "full-blown structure" in Pretoria for training journalists. Manheru goes on to name Sydney Masamvu (a South Africa-based political analyst), Sizani Weza (Embassy Harare's LES Press Specialist), MDC's Luke Tamborinyka, Frank Chikowere (VOA stringer), and Brian Hungwe (BBC stringer) as implicated in "misdeeds and espionage." Manheru then declares he "happen(s) to know that the authorities are about to place a price on those concerned, and let no one cry." Also on December 13, The Herald accused the U.S. of "masterminding" the ongoing cholera epidemic as a form of biological warfare against Zimbabwe.

COMMENT

3. (SBU) Government-sponsored vitriol against the U.S. continues unabated, and it appears the regime is making additional efforts to target journalists. Local journalists we have spoken to are taking the threat seriously, and see it as a potential opening salvo in a

further assault on the media. We are particularly concerned that one of our staff members was named in the Manheru article. The recent spate of abductions and arrests reflect significant and continuing efforts by the regime to intimidate and silence government critics. END COMMENT.

DHANANI